

## Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3227  
INFO USLO PEKING  
AMEMBASSY TOKYO  
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

UNCLAS HONG KONG 15054

FOR AGRICULTURE, FAS, ASST. ADMINISTRATOR, FOREIGN COMMODITY  
ANALYSIS: INFO: DIRECTOR, INFORMATION DIVISION  
FROM: AGRICULTURAL OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: EAGR, CH  
SUBJECT: PEKING CLAIMS RECORD GRAIN HARVEST IN 1976

REF: (A) HONG KONG 14866

BEGIN SUMMARY: IN YEAR-END OFFICIAL STATEMENT ON 1976  
AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION RESULTS, CHINA'S NCNA CLAIMS  
RECORD GRAIN HARVEST AND INCREASED PRODUCTION IN SUGAR  
CROPS, BAST FIBERS AND TOBACCO. NO MENTION WAS MADE OF  
COTTON OR OILSEED HARVEST RESULTS. END SUMMARY.

1. IN ITS ANNUAL STATEMENT ON CHINA'S AGRICULTURAL PERFORMANCE  
FOR DURING THE YEAR, NCNA ON DECEMBER 29 CLAIMED THAT "CHINA'S  
GRAIN OUTPUT HIT AN ALL-TIME HIGH IN 1976, MARKING THE  
FIFTEENTH CONSECUTIVE YEAR OF GOOD HARVESTS." THE  
RELEASE ALSO CLAIMED INCREASES OVER 1975 IN PRODUCTION OF  
SUGAR CROPS, BAST FIBERS, TOBACCO, TEA AND SILK COCOONS.

2. AMONG OTHER HIGHLIGHTS: (A) THE MAJORITY OF  
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PROVINCIAL-LEVEL UNITS "SURPASSED OR REACHED 1975 LEVEL IN  
GRAIN PRODUCTION;" AND (B) "SOME PARTS OF CHINA WERE HIT  
BY DROUGHT, WATERLOGGING, COLD SPEELS, EARLY FROSTS AND  
EARTHQUAKES IN 1976." CREDIT WAS GIVEN TO RURAL CADRES AND  
COMMUNE MEMBERS FOR THEIR "STUBBORN FIGHT AGAINST EFFECTS  
OF NATURAL ADVERSITIES" AND FOR THEIR WORK IN RURAL CAPITAL

CONSTRUCTION; AND ALSO TO THE 1.6 MILLION CADRES ORGANIZED IN WORK TEAMS WHO WENT TO LIVE AND WORK WITH THE PEASANTS.

3. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH GIVING NO QUANTITATIVE INFORMATION, NCNA'S CLAIM SUPPORTS AGOFFICE'S PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF RECORD GRAIN HARVEST (REFA) WHILE STATEMENT ON PROVINCIAL-LEVEL UNITS SURPASSING OR MAINTAINING 1975 LEVEL (PARA 2, ABOVE) SEEMS IN LINE WITH ESTIMATED INCREASE OF 4-6 PERCENT OVER 1975. (REF A.)

4. INCREASE IN SUGAR CROP PRODUCTION OF COURSE MEANS INCREASE IN REFINED SUGAR OUTPUT THIS CRUSHING SEASON, BUT CHINA REMAINS FAR FROM SELF-SUFFICIENT IN SUGAR, SO IMPORTS CAN BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE.

5. INCREASE IN TOBACCO PRODUCTION SHOULD MEAN TOTAL OUTPUT IN EXCESS OF ONE MILLION METRIC TONS, WITH FLUE-CURED ACCOUNTING FOR THE BULK. (ESTIMATED TOTAL PRODUCTION IN 1975 WAS APPROX. ONE MILLION M.T.)

6. ON NEGATIVE SIDE, NCNA RELEASE FAILED TO MENTION COTTON AND OILSEEDS. IT NOW SEEMS PROBABLE THAT HEAVY RAINS IN SUMMER AND EARLY AUTUMN DAMAGED THE COTTON CROP IN THE YELLOW RIVER BASIN (AN IMPORTANT GROWING REGION) MORE THAN HAD BEEN ASSUMED EARLIER.

7. LACK OF MENTION OF OILSEEDS SUGGESTS POSSIBILITY OF LESS-THAN-HOPED-FOR PRODUCTION THIS YEAR. WHILE THE WINTER RAPE HARVEST WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN GOOD, YIELDS OF PEANUTS AND SESAME, BOTH VULNERABLE TO HEAVY RAINS, MAY UNCLASSIFIED

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WELL HAVE BEEN ADVERSELY AFFECTED (AS COTTON IS BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN).

8. SOYBEAN PRODUCTION ALSO APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY UNFAVORABLE WEATHER. ACCORDING TO AN EARLIER REPORT, YULIN HSIEN IN KIRIN PROVINCE, A MAJOR SOYBEAN-PRODUCING AREA, SUFFERED FROM "THE WORST NATURAL ADVERSITIES IN YEARS" (H.K. TA KUNG PAO, DEC. 21, 1976). IT IS THEREFORE HIGHLY LIKELY THAT ANNUMBER OF OTHER AREAS IN THE NORTHEAST, THE LEADING SOYBEAN-PRODUCING REGION IN CHINA, ALSO MAY HAVE SUFFERED FROM SIMILAR NATURAL CALAMITIES DURING THE 1976 GROWING SEASON. IT THUS APPEARS JUSTIFIED TO CONCLUDE THAT EXCEPT FOR RAPESEED MOST OF CHINA'S OIL-BEARING CROPS DID NOT DO WELL IN 1976.  
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